

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

5 1. In an electronic device having a plurality of application programs, a method of monitoring usage comprising the steps of:

- a) gathering usage statistics of said application programs;
 - b) storing said usage statistics; and
 - c) transmitting said stored usage statistics to a server that tabulates said
- 10 usage statistics.

 2. A method as described in Claim 1 wherein said storing step comprises, for at least one said application program, storing of:

- i) duration of usage since last said transmitting step occurred;
- 15 ii) number of times used since last said transmitting step occurred;
- iii) total duration usage; and
- iv) total number of times used.

 3. A method as described in Claim 1 and further comprising the step

20 of displaying said stored usage statistics on a display of said electronic device.

 4. A method as described in Claim 1 wherein said gathering step measures duration of usage of at least one said application program and does not include time when said electronic device is turned off.

25 5. A method as described in Claim 1 wherein said gathering step comprises:

i) measuring, for at least one said application program, a first duration of usage while said electronic device is running on batteries; and

ii) measuring, for said at least one application program, a second duration of usage while said electronic device is connected to an external source of power.

6. A method as described in Claim 5 wherein said measuring steps do not include time when an interrupt pauses use of said at least one application program.

7. A method as described in Claim 1 wherein said gathering step measures duration of application usage, and when an auto-shutoff occurs, includes a fraction of the time from a last user interaction to said auto-shutoff in said measured duration.

8. A method as described in Claim 1 wherein said electronic device is a palm-sized computer system.

9. A method as described in Claim 1 wherein said electronic device is a wireless telephone.

10. In an personal digital assistant having a plurality of application programs, a method of monitoring usage comprising the steps of:

- a) gathering usage statistics of said application programs;
- b) storing said usage statistics; and
- c) transmitting said stored usage statistics to a server that tabulates said usage statistics.

11. A method as described in Claim 10 wherein said storing step comprises, for at least one said application program, storing of:

- i) duration of usage since last said transmitting step occurred;
- 5 ii) number of times used since last said transmitting step occurred;
- iii) total duration usage; and
- iv) total number of times used.

12. A method as described in Claim 10 and further comprising the step
10 of displaying said stored usage statistics on a display of said electronic device.

13. A method as described in Claim 10 wherein said gathering step comprises:

- i) measuring, for at least one said application program, a first duration of
15 usage while said electronic device is running on batteries; and
- ii) measuring, for said at least one application program, a second duration of usage while said electronic device is connected to an external source of power.

20 14. A method as described in Claim 10 wherein said personal digital assistant is a palm-sized computer system.

15 15. A method as described in Claim 10 wherein said personal digital assistant is a wireless telephone.

25 16. An electronic device comprising a processor coupled to a bus, a display coupled to said bus and a memory coupled to said bus, said memory

having a database of records of different categories and instructions
implementing a method of displaying information comprising the steps of:

a) gathering usage statistics of said application programs;

b) storing said usage statistics; and

5 c) transmitting said stored usage statistics to a server that tabulates said
usage statistics.

17. A method as described in Claim 16 wherein said storing step
comprises, for at least one said application program, storing of:

10 i) duration of usage since last said transmitting step occurred;

ii) number of times used since last said transmitting step occurred;

iii) total duration usage; and

iv) total number of times used.

15 18. A method as described in Claim 16 and further comprising the step
of displaying said stored usage statistics on a display of said electronic device.

19. A method as described in Claim 16 wherein said gathering step
comprises:

20 i) measuring, for at least one said application program, a first duration of
usage while said electronic device is running on batteries; and

ii) measuring, for said at least one application program, a second duration
of usage while said electronic device is connected to an external source of
power.

25 20. A method as described in Claim 16 wherein said electronic device
is a palm-sized computer system.

21. A method as described in Claim 16 wherein said electronic device is a wireless telephone.

5 22. In a system comprising a plurality of electronic devices having application programs and a computer server, a method of monitoring usage comprising the steps of:

- a) gathering usage statistics of said application programs;
- b) storing said usage statistics;
- 10 c) transmitting said stored usage statistics to a server; and
- d) tabulating said transmitted usage statistics.

23. A method as described in Claim 22, the system further comprising a host computer, and further comprising the step of transmitting said stored
15 usage statistics to said host computer before transmitting said stored usage statistics to said server.

24. A method as described in Claim 22 and further comprising the step of publishing said tabulated usage statistics on the Internet.

20 25. A method as described in Claim 22 and further comprising the step of crediting value to an account corresponding to at least one of said electronic devices.

25 26. In one or more computer servers, a method of collecting usage statistics comprising the steps of:

- a) receiving usage statistics for at least one application program, said usage statistics having been gathered by electronic devices;
- b) tabulating said received usage statistics; and
- c) publishing said tabulated usage statistics.

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27. A method as described in Claim 26 and further comprising the step of crediting value to an account corresponding to at least one of said electronic devices.

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28. A method as described in Claim 26 and further comprising the step of storing said tabulated usage results in a database that can be queried.

29. A method as described in Claim 28 wherein said publishing step comprises:

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- a) receiving a query request;
- b) applying said query to said database;
- c) receiving query results from said database;
- d) formatting said results; and
- e) transmitting said formatted results.

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